

veteran. He had been stationed on the front lines in Germany for several months. A part of the 36th "Texas" Division, Herrera had experienced the most violent fighting in the Central Europe campaign when the Allies closed in to deliver the finishing blow on Nazi Germany. As Americans advanced toward the border, German resistance mounted. That day, Herrera's division, the 142nd Regiment, neared the French-German border town of Mertzwiller. When orders were given to advance the town, Herrera, being a scout, was 400 yards ahead of his company. The regiment was suddenly overwhelmed by machine gun nest fire from the enemy. Armed with only a bayonet and an M1 hand rifle, Herrera single-handedly captured eight German soldiers and sent them to American lines. However, upon gearing up for a second attempt to end the gunfire, he stepped on an anti-personnel mine that blew off both his feet. Despite the intense pain and loss of blood, Herrera continued to fight and kill two more German soldiers. His presence enabled his comrades to lead a full frontal attack on the enemy position. For his heroism that day Silvestre Herrera was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

And last, but certainly not least—a hero from Congressional District 2. One of twelve children from a large Mexican American family, Lucian Adams was born in Port Arthur, Texas in 1922. The summer of 1944, Adams was stationed near the town of Saint-Die in the Mortagne forest of France. With supply lines cut off by the Germans, Adams was sent out as a scout for his company and alerted the commander of three enemy machine gun nests. He was given orders to "go on out there and make a breakthrough to get those GIs." Armed with a borrowed Browning automatic rifle, Adams and his men started walking in a heavily wooded area of the forest. Having only walked 10 yards, enemy machine guns killed three men and wounded six others almost instantaneously. The company ran to take cover. However, Adams charged forward. He killed nine Germans, shot lobbying grenades, eliminated three enemy machine guns and forced two German infantrymen to surrender. In a matter of 10 minutes, Adams had successfully cleared the woods of enemy soldiers and reopened the severed supply line. Adams was dubbed "The Texas Tornado" by his company men and received the Medal of Honor in 1945.

The Medal of Honor is the nation's highest award for gallantry in action and is only given to the bravest of the brave. It is the American symbol of knighthood. Men like Rodriguez, Herrera and Adams deserve only the utmost respect from their countrymen. They are statues of strength—true visions of valor. With a thankful heart, I tip my hat to the Texas heroes who fought and are fighting for liberty. America salutes you.

And, that's just the way it is.

HONORING APPLETON FIRE-
FIGHTERS CAPT. RICK JAMES,
CAPT. MIKE WOODZICKA, DOUG
VRECHEK AND MIKE BECKER

HON. STEVE KAGEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2010

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to pay tribute to Appleton firefighters

Capt. Rick James, Capt. Mike Woodzicka, Doug Vrechek and Mike Becker, as they are inducted into the Wisconsin Fire and Police Hall of Fame for saving the lives of four young children. As friends, family and colleagues gather to pay tribute to their courage and bravery, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these outstanding individuals.

On December 29, 2007, Capt. Rick James, Capt. Mike Woodzicka, Doug Vrechek and Mike Becker valiantly rescued four children from a burning house in my hometown of Appleton, WI. The children, who were all under the age of seven and included 15-month-old twins, were trapped in the house, unable to escape. The firefighters acted swiftly and heroically, rescuing the children within four minutes of arriving at the scene.

In recognition of this courageous act, the firefighters were inducted into the State of Wisconsin Fire and Police Hall of Fame on September 10, 2010. The Hall of Fame recognizes firefighters and police officers in Wisconsin who have performed a heroic act, been an innovator in advancing the productivity or safety of services, or who have provided exceptional community service.

Madam Speaker, without questions, the service of Capt. Rick James, Capt. Mike Woodzicka, Doug Vrechek and Mike Becker has been selfless and exemplary, and their induction into the Wisconsin Fire and Police Hall of Fame is very well-deserved. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting these truly heroic members of our community.

HONORING MICHELLE STAUFFER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Michelle Stauffer upon her retirement from Wawona School.

Mrs. Michelle Stauffer has spent the past 29 years serving as a teaching principal at Wawona School; a kindergarten through sixth grade, one-room elementary school in Yosemite National Park. Wawona School has been serving the children that live in the park since the late 1800's. Park rangers, firefighters and other National Park Service employees rely on this community school, and Mrs. Stauffer, to educate and nurture their children. During its existence, the school has educated the children of many Yosemite pioneer families, including the Washburn, Bruce and Gordon families.

Mrs. Stauffer is dedicated to providing a solid education for the students. Field trips to Washington DC, museums, live theater and the San Francisco Opera are part of the curriculum at Wawona School. Mrs. Stauffer believes these field trips are an important part of exposing her students to life outside of the park.

Mrs. Stauffer is an extraordinary person and educator. She is dedicated to the Yosemite community and especially to her students. She is committed to providing her students with the very best education in the most nurturing environment possible.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michelle Stauffer for her dedicated service to

the students of Wawona School. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mrs. Stauffer many years of continued success.

HONORING MARIA RODRIGUEZ FOR A LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2010

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate decades of service to the community by a longtime and dear friend, both to me and my husband and to the children and families of New Haven, Connecticut: Maria Rodriguez.

Elected to New Haven's Board of Aldermen in 1976, Maria has the distinction of being the first Hispanic alderperson in the history of our city. But that service was only the beginning of her contributions to our city and state. For as long as I have known her, Maria has given of herself to the people around her, and has worked to make New Haven a richer, more vibrant, and more compassionate community.

Indeed, Maria has spent a lifetime doing so. She began her career in the early 1970s as a trained mental health therapist at the Connecticut Mental Health Center, where she worked day in and day out to improve the experience and the quality of life of Hispanic families in the Greater New Haven area. As my husband Stan, Maria, and I worked on so many local political campaigns then, we became great friends. She helped us to forge many wonderful friendships in New Haven's Hispanic community. She is a tireless worker and a strong ally.

After receiving her Masters from Southern Connecticut State University in 1983, and spending a year as a key and valuable aide to my predecessor, Bruce Morrison, Maria soon moved into full-time social work. For over 25 years, through organizations such as the Connecticut Board of Education, Family Counseling of Greater New Haven, and Latino Youth Development, Inc., she provided therapy to families and students in need of mental health care.

In her off-hours, Maria kept on giving. From serving on the Board of the YMCA to tutoring students in her free time, she has always looked for more ways to help those in need and to improve our city. And, now that she has decided to retire from the Connecticut Board of Education, I can only expect she is already thinking of new ways to volunteer her time and her effort.

For that is who Maria is. For decades now, she has continued to infuse our community with her warmth and energy, her caring and compassion. I thank her deeply for her service to the families of New Haven, and for her years of friendship to me. And I congratulate her and her family—her husband Alquilino, her son Paul, and daughter-in-law Bunny—on reaching this milestone. Congratulations, Maria, you have earned it.